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MERT™ Aids In Relief Of Pentagon Rescue Workers

It was a day that saddened the hearts of Americans, and the world. But while people around the globe watched the aftermath of the tragic terrorist events of September 11, 2001, unfold on television, the AMTA Virginia Chapter Massage Emergency Response Team™ (MERT) witnessed the devastation firsthand, and brought comfort to those affected by it.

The Virginia team was contacted by the state's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to provide massage to rescue workers at the Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia. AMTA President-Elect **Brenda Griffith (VA)** was one of the first AMTA MERT responders onsite, arriving at 3 a.m. Eastern time on September 12.

Running on adrenaline, Griffith recalls standing by a fence and viewing the crash site for the first time. "It takes your brain awhile to process," she says. "This [building] is our [nation's] defense, and it had a hole in it."

Griffith and seven other AMTA Virginia Chapter MERT responders—**Holly Brim**, Virginia MERT coordinator; **Holly Hermanson**; **Cynthia McIlwee**; **Karen Harrell**; **Beth Thran**; **Mary Molnia**; and **Roger Gossement**—provided massages to firefighters, police officers and other emergency rescue workers in the rehabilitation area, away from the perimeter of the crash site.

Rescue workers were given 10- to 15-minute chair massages. Griffith says most were quiet, but those who talked only spoke of their families. Those who got a massage for the first time were very impressed with the results. "They were grateful," comments Griffith. "They couldn't believe how much better they felt."

Griffith recalls that her arms and hands became tired throughout her shift, but "the opportunity kept me going—the opportunity to let people know what massage can do."

The AMTA Virginia Chapter MERT team just completed its MERT training on August 12. After the disaster, more AMTA Professional* members were trained in Virginia, September 15 and September 16, to help in the effort.

Because Virginia EMS requires all of its workers to serve no more than 72-hour shifts, they requested the first AMTA Virginia MERT shift off-duty. Griffith, being in full rescue mode, didn't want to leave. "I was almost mad at them," she recalls. "You get caught up. You want to help."

In other AMTA MERT efforts, the AMTA Pennsylvania MERT team was called for a seven-day deployment to the Pennsylvania crash site, beginning the morning of September 19. A call to action came in New York from the New York City Police Department, and AMTA MERT team members arrived in the city the morning of September 20. Look on the AMTA Web site [**www.amtamassage.org**] for current information about the AMTA MERT deployments.

**To participate in AMTA's MERT program, you must be a Professional-category member, and have taken the MERT training. Contact your chapter for its next training dates.*

AMTA Highly Visible At Legislative Conferences

In an effort to work with legislators to improve regulatory and practice status for massage therapists, AMTA sends representatives to exhibit at national legislative conferences across the country. So far his year, AMTA has attended two national conferences–the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

The goal of these conferences is to meet state legislators and other legislative staff to show that: 1) massage therapy is a viable profession; and 2) AMTA can be a valuable resource if the legislators are considering massage therapy legislation. Local AMTA members in the areas of the conferences provide on-site massage to the legislators so they can experience, firsthand, the benefits of massage, while gaining insight into the association.

Making connections with legislators at conferences is especially valuable to states that have no massage therapy legislation in place. AMTA members in nonregulated states are provided with the contact information of legislators who have attended these legislative conferences, and are in favor of passing future massage therapy legislation.

Those who attended ALEC (August 1-3 in New York) included **Denise Logsdon (VA)**, Government Relations Committee chair; **Brenda Griffith (VA)**, AMTA vice president; and Cheryl Neely, AMTA government relations staff liaison. Those who attended the August 13-15 NCSL Conference in San Antonio included Logsdon; **Steve Olson (ND)**, former AMTA president; **John Fred Spack (OH)**, Government Relations Committee member; and Neely.

AMTA also will be exhibiting at the National League of Cities in Atlanta on December 6-7.

AMTA's support of legislation stems from the Strategic Plan,
approved by the AMTA Board of Directors and based on member survey results showing that legislation is an important priority. The association has had a presence at legislative conferences for almost 10 years.

Chapter Assignment Reminder

The AMTA Bylaws Article III, Section 3, Membership in Chapters, states:

A. All members shall be assigned to a Chapter having territorial jurisdiction of the area where the member practices, resides or attends school, or in the case of a legal entity where it is located provided such Chapter exists.

Please note that if you wish to change your chapter assignment to that of a state other than your AMTA mailing address, you must provide proof of address. Proof of address can include: 1) a copy of your home or business telephone or electric bill; 2) a copy of your school registration; or 3) a copy of your license or state ID, with address listed on it. If you have any questions, please contact Member Services at
847-864-0123.

President's Letter: *Sadness And Emotion*

It is with sadness and emotion that I write my first President's Letter for *Hands On*. Each one of us has been affected by the tragic terrorist attack against our nation that occurred September 11, 2001. This is a very important time in our history—a time when we as a nation need to support the leaders of our country, and a time when we need to stand together and support one another. It is my hope that as members, parents, partners, facilitators and healers, we will survive and even thrive through this very difficult period. Our leaders have declared our country at war. We need to pray for the men and women who will fight for our freedom and safety. When our country is in such strife and struggle, we will decide for ourselves how we are going to participate, and what our role will be.

As facilitators of wellness and health, we can bring tremendous comfort to our clients, our families and our communities. I encourage all of you to give your time to the people in your lives who need to lessen their stress. I would like to remind all of you to take care of yourselves as well. We must, as healers, lead the way for the many who will need to be reminded to take care of themselves. If we bring peace to our clients, this peace can spread to many. We are the peacemakers in our society; we are the healers in our communities.

The AMTA National Office has been very busy answering your calls offering help in many ways. This is an example of who we are, and where our hearts are. Our members have joined with massage therapists across the United States to offer support to those rescue workers in Virginia, New York and Pennsylvania. The unity, willingness and unconditional support that you have offered have touched my heart.

AMTA's Massage Emergency Response Team™ (MERT) responded to the terrorist attack at the Pentagon within 24 hours. (For more information, see the article about MERT on Page 1 of this issue.) Many of you gathered at the training areas to be properly trained in order to join the AMTA MERT team. **Erica Lind (WA)**, AMTA MERT committee chair, along with other MERT team leaders, put in a lot of work to make it a success.
Others members, nonmembers and organizations helped by donating money to support this effort. I would like to personally thank each of you for giving your time and unconditional support to this cause. The entire AMTA National Board appreciates your goodness.

Our sadness and emotions will linger, while our thoughts and prayers will be with the families who have lost their loved ones during this terrible tragedy. We will never forget this time in our history, but we will stand together as members of AMTA, and offer peace and healing to the world.

God bless America, and God bless all of you.

Fingerprints

Religious Therapists Receive Local Media Coverage

The Women Religious Body Workers of St. Louis were featured in an April 19 article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and in a July 3 cover story segment on television station KSDK.

The Women Religious Body Workers is comprised of 11 sisters in St. Louis and the surrounding area who use their religious background to focus on the mind, body and spirit of their clients.

"There's nothing that we do with the body that does not affect the mind and the spirit," says Sister **Andre' Evanicsko (MO)**.

The group meets once a month to exchange ideas, share new techniques with one another and pray. In fact, each of the sisters begins each massage session they give to their clients with a prayer.

"It's very meaningful for them," says Sister Evanicsko. "We make it very personal."

The sisters in the group became therapists for a variety of reasons. Some wanted to extend their experience in the health-care field or received massage in the past and believed in its benefits, while others wanted a change of pace from their past careers. Each of the sisters is personally affected by the massages they give.

"I find it fulfilling to extend the healing ministry of Jesus through my hands and help others physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually as a result of my touch and prayerful presence," says Sister **Nancy Vandeveer (MO)**.

Others in the group include Sisters **Jean Brown**, **Kathy Buchheit**, **Betty Carpentier**, **Sherri Coleman**, **Marilyn Jean Davis**, Kate Filla, **Francesca Klawinski**, **Gladys Leigh** and **Pat Mueller**.

Member's Advocacy Efforts Gain Her Recognition

Lavina Tomer (AZ) has been named Citizen of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers' Arizona chapter. Tomer, an advocate against domestic violence in same-sex relationships, helped initiate the Wingspan Domestic Violence Project, an emergency shelter and support group for men and women in Tucson.

Popular Game Show Features Member

Steve Capellini (FL) recently appeared as a contestant on the game show "To Tell The Truth," an NBC-network show taped in Burbank, California. Capellini was contacted by the show's producers, based on the success of his popular spa and massage books.

Florida Chamber Of Commerce Honors Member

The Greater Seminole Area Chamber of Commerce honored **Eva Jones (FL)** in May with the Ms. Seminole 2000 award, the chamber's highest honor. Jones, who is a member of various community and state boards and is an active community volunteer, says her greatest accomplishment was volunteering at the 1996 Paralympics in Atlanta.

Consumer Survey Shows More People Getting Massage

Results of the 2001 survey of consumer attitudes about massage, commissioned by AMTA, showed that more Americans went to a massage therapist in the last 12 months (17 percent) than in past years, and more than 24 percent expect to get a massage in the next year.

On July 26, 2001, Opinion Research Corporation International polled 1,000 U.S. adults for their attitudes and usage of massage. This is the fifth year that AMTA has commissioned the study.

Since 1997, the percentage of American adults who say they received a massage from a massage therapist has risen steadily. This year, 27 percent say they have had a massage in the past five years. In 1997, only 17 percent said they had a massage in the previous five years. This means that the number of people who had a massage in just the past year alone (17 percent) is equal to the number of people in 1997 who said they had a massage in a five-year period.

This year, the survey asked questions related to public understanding of massage and massage therapists, as well as the respondents usage of massage. For example, when researchers asked from whom people would prefer to get a massage, 43 percent said they prefer a female massage therapist, but 49 percent said the gender of the massage therapist doesn't matter. Six percent said they prefer a male massage therapist.

More survey respondents (40 percent) prefer to receive a massage from a massage therapist at their own home, while 26 percent prefer the massage therapist's office and 23 percent prefer sessions in a day spa.

The enclosed Consumer Survey Fact Sheet results have been sent to news and media outlets throughout the country. You are free to copy the fact sheet to help promote massage and your practice. Look for more survey results in the next issue of *Hands On*.

Web Site News

Take The AMTA Web Survey

AMTA would like to have your comments about its Web site and what other features you would like to see added to the site. To take the survey, go to the Member's Section home page (**www.amtamassage.org/members/home.htm**), and click on the button at the top of the page that reads, "Take Our Web Survey."

Massage Emergency Response Team™ Information Online

AMTA has had a number of requests from the Web survey asking for information on the Web site about AMTA's Massage Emergency Response Team (MERT) program. MERT information is available on the Web site and is updated regularly, based on activity and training dates. For basic information in the Consumer Section, click on the "About AMTA" link at: **www.amtamassage.org/about/aboutMERT.htm**. For details and an online registration form in the Member's Section, click on the "Programs" link at: **www.amtamassage.org/members/mertindex.htm.** For current information on MERT activity in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania, click on **www.amtamassage.org/about/mertbulletins.htm**.

Get Your Free Subscription To *e-touch*

AMTA's free monthly e-zine, *e-touch, a massage newsletter*℠, is your source for the latest information on techniques, tips and massage-related events. Recently added to the e-zine is a "Calendar of Events" section to keep members up-to-date on events within AMTA and other alternative medicine organizations.

Issues of *e-touch* are sent electronically to the E-mail address you designate. To sign up for your free subscription, go to: **www.amtamassage.org/publications/mailist.htm**. To submit articles and article ideas for possible publication, E-mail them at: ***etouch@amtamassage.org***.

Annual Report (2000-2001)

Excerpted information from AMTA's audited financial statements for the period March 1, 2000 to February 28, 2001.

Revenue

Membership Dues	$7,784,631
Sales of Literature & Others	$848,929
Meetings and Education	$521,463
Investment Income	$281,046
Miscellaneous	$208,738
Total	**$9,644,807**

Expenses

Meetings and Education	$692,108
Communications	$1,547,910
Chapter Relations	$251,441
Chapter Assistance	$1,146,240
Membership	$3,674,268
Marketing	$283,027
Grants	$198,500
Administrative and Governance	$1,995,002
Total	**$9,788,496**

AMTA Foundation News

Database Offers Nearly 2,000 Massage Research Citations

At the AMTA National Convention in Quebec City, Canada, the AMTA Foundation unveiled the Massage Therapy Research Database. The database, with detailed instructions about how to use it, is available free of charge at: **www.amtamassage.org/foundation/dbase.htm**.

The database currently contains approximately 1,800 citations of research articles about massage therapy.

At this time, the database contains all the information necessary to retrieve an article from a library (i.e., author, publication and dates of publication). As funding permits, other plans include the translation of foreign language articles into English, and summaries of research in specific subject areas.

Foundation Recognizes Grant Award Recipients

The AMTA Foundation congratulates recent grant award recipients:

Research

- ***Vonda K. Jump***, Ph.D.–Utah State University; "Infant Massage in Ecuadorian Orphanages."
- ***Prabhat K. Pokhrel***, M.D.–New York College for Wholistic Health, Education and Research; "Complementary Therapy for Stage II Breast Cancer."

Scholarship

- ***Timothy Hanold***–Brian Utting School of Massage; Jeff Young Memorial Scholarship.
- ***Jena Harper***–Onondaga School of Therapeutic Massage.
- ***Shonna Jordan***–Crystal Mountain Massage Therapy School; Pierette Plouffe Memorial Scholarship.
- ***Dylan Lott***–Chicago School of Massage Therapy; Pierrette Plouffe Memorial Scholarship.

Community Outreach

- ***Barbara Head***–Hospice and Palliative Care of Louisville; "Massage Therapy for Dementia and Noncommunicative Hospice Patients."
- ***Edith Seyl***–Weaver's Tale Retreat Center; "Seniors in Touch at Weaver's Tale Retreat Center, Part II."
- ***Susan Singer***–On Our Own and Associates, Inc.; "Learning Disabled Adults Learn Through Massage."
- ***Angelita Siojo***–Rehabilitation Enterprises of North Eastern Wyoming (RENEW); "RENEW in Touch."
- ***Laura Waldvogel***–Langlade Memorial Hospital; "Langlade Memorial Hospital Massage Project."

COMTA News

The information below details latest news and workshops from COMTA:

- COMTA welcomed four new commissioners at its fall meeting. These included **Dawn Schmidt (WA)**, COMTA school educator; Melissa Wade and **Johanna Sechuck (NJ)**, COMTA school administrators; and Ruth Kurlandsky, Ph.D., professional educator. Each of these individuals began their terms in October, after the commission meeting. They are highly qualified to serve COMTA and the profession in their roles on the commission.
- COMTA will be considered for recognition as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education at the December meeting of the Advisory Committee for Institutional Quality and Integrity. With the recognition, COMTA-accredited schools would become eligible to apply for participation in federal financial aid programs.
- COMTA will be offering an additional onsite evaluator workshop at the Desert Institute of the Healing Arts in Tucson, Arizona, on January 20, 2002. Please call COMTA for more information at 847-869-5039, ext. 140. More information can also be found on COMTA's Web site at: **www.comta.org/workshop.htm**.
- An accreditation workshop is also being held in Tucson, January 21 and 22, just prior to the Council of Schools annual meeting. This workshop is designed for those intending to enter the accreditation process. Attendance on both days is required for schools that have not previously been accredited by COMTA. Schools renewing their accreditation are only required to participate in the second day of the workshop. Please contact COMTA at 847-869-5039, ext. 140, regarding registration.

Calendar
Regional & National Events

2002

January 22–26

AMTA Council of Schools Annual Meeting
Tucson, Arizona
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 150
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

April 19–21

AMTA National Learning Center
Salt Lake City, Utah
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

June 7–10

AMTA National Learning Center
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

July 12–14

AMTA National Learning Center
Columbus, Ohio
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143

October 2–6

AMTA National Convention
Portland, Oregon
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

October 20–26

National Massage Therapy Awareness Week
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 149

Education Events

Join Us For Quality Education At AMTA's National Learning Centers 2002

Looking for continuing education that is worth your hard-earned money? AMTA's National Learning Centers provide diverse and innovative continuing education at an affordable price with a quality you can trust. Look for us next year in:

- **Salt Lake City, Utah**; Sheraton City Centre; April 19-21, 2002;
- **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**; Sheraton Four Points; June 7-10, 2002;
- **Columbus, Ohio**; Hyatt Regency; July 12-14, 2002.

Look in future issues of *Hands On* for more information about the 2002 National Learning Centers.